

Biography of John Mitchell: Maryland 400 veteran

John Mitchell (1760-1812)

MSA SC 3520-16772

Sergeant, First Maryland Regiment, 1776

Second Lieutenant, First Maryland Regiment, 1776-1777

First Lieutenant, First Maryland Regiment, 1777-1779

Regimental Adjutant, First Maryland Regiment, 1779

Captain, First Maryland Regiment, 1779-1781

Captain, Fourth Maryland Regiment, 1781-1783

Lieutenant Colonel, Forty-Third Regiment, Maryland militia, 1794-1796

Brigadier General, Fifth Brigade, Maryland militia, 1796-1797

Magistrate, Charles County, 1801-1802

<http://msa.maryland.gov/msa/speccol/sc3500/sc3520/016700/016772/html/msa16772.html>

John Mitchell was born in 1760 in Charles County, Maryland, to Scottish settler Hugh Mitchell and his wife, Anne Hanson. [1] Mitchell had two sisters named Katherine and Jenet. [2] In early 1761, Mitchell's father, a well-off planter, merchant, and landowner, died. He willed his daughter Katherine and wife land in Charles County, divided his estate among his children, including the sixteen enslaved blacks working on his plantation. [3] Unlike Katherine, John was not willed anything specifically by his father. However, as the eldest son he would have gained control over 373 acres of land divided up into three tracts: Shaws Folly, Cains Purchase, and Moberly. [4]

On January 24, 1776, he enlisted as a sergeant in Captain [John Hoskins Stone](#)'s First Company of the First Maryland Regiment, commanded by [William Smallwood](#). [5] Mitchell, like many of those in the First Company, was recruited from Charles County. The company trained in Annapolis until they departed for New York. [6] As Mitchell got his first taste of battle, he would begin his "career of glory" and fight under "the command of the gallant Smallwood." [7]

A sergeant, like Mitchell, had an important role in the Maryland Line. As non-commissioned officers, their duties included maintaining discipline within their company, and inspecting the new recruits. [8] Their other duties included carrying sick soldiers to the hospital as needed, reporting on the sickness of men within the ranks, and leading groups of men to guard prisoners or supplies if circumstances required it. [9] For these services they were paid more than corporals in Maryland, who they oversaw, and worked with, to keep order in place in the company, including breaking up disputes between soldiers. [10] In order to get in this position, however, their field officers or captains had to recommend them for promotion. [11]

The First Maryland Regiment were the first troops Maryland raised at the beginning of the Revolutionary War. Maryland was more than willing to do its part to recruit the men needed to fill the Continental Army's depleted ranks. [12] A few days after independence was declared, the First Maryland Regiment were ordered to New York so it could join the forces of General George Washington. The regiment arrived there in early August, with the Battle of Brooklyn set between the Continental Army and the British Army, joined by their Hessian allies.

Mitchell served with 26-year-old Stone and his company at the Battle of Brooklyn in late August 1776. Unlike the companies of [Barton Lucas](#), [Daniel Bowie](#), [Peter Adams](#), [Benjamin Ford](#), and [Edward Veazey](#), only 15 percent of the First Company were either killed or captured, with these other companies suffering heavier losses. Few were killed, while the company's ensign, [James Farnandis](#), was captured by British forces. [13] Even so, the loss of life by the other companies confirmed the assessment of the British Parliament's *Annual Register* which [described](#) how "almost a whole regiment from Maryland...of young men from the best families in the country was cut to pieces" even as the battle brought the men of the Maryland 400 together. [14]

The Battle of Brooklyn, the first large-scale battle of the war, fits into the larger context of the Revolutionary War. If the Maryland Line had not stood and fought the British, enabling the rest of the Continental Army to escape, then the Continental Army would have been decimated, resulting in the end of the Revolutionary War. This heroic stand gave the regiment the nickname of the Old Line and those who made the stand in the battle are remembered as the Maryland 400.

Mitchell survived the Battle of Brooklyn like most of the company. In December 1776, Mitchell re-enlisted in the First Maryland Regiment and was promoted to second lieutenant. [15] He only occupied this position for six months, as his rank increased to first lieutenant in June 1777. [16] He would stay in this position for almost two years, serving in [Henry Chew Gaither](#)'s company. During this time period, he served with his company in the battles of Trenton (1776), Brandywine (1777) and Germantown (1777). He likely did not participate in the Battle of Monmouth because he was put on furlough in the summer of 1778 and may have lived in Charles County's Port Tobacco West Hundred during that time period. [17]

In May 1779 he became regimental adjutant of the First Maryland Regiment, and chief administrator of the unit. [18] In this position he kept one of the orderly books for the regiment as they wrote down the orders of the regiment every day. [19] Adjutants tried to maintain discipline, and at times this could include overseeing executions of soldiers convicted of wrongs. [20] These officers inspected guards and soldiers of the regiment while in camp. [21] They also rode along the regiment's flank to observe regularity in marching.

He did not have this rank for long. In July 1779, he was promoted once again to the position of captain. [22] As captain, he led his company in numerous military engagements. While there were quartermasters, he received the normal supplies for his soldiers, including gallons of rum and coffee. [23] In the summer of 1779, he signed a statement, along with 95 other Maryland officers, including [John Gassaway](#) and [Gassaway Watkins](#), and co-signed by William Smallwood, to ask for support from the state legislature because of depreciated Continental currency, a plea which was successful. [24]

On January 1, 1781 he was transferred to the Fourth Maryland Regiment and retained his rank as a captain. [25] In this capacity, he fought alongside his company in the battles of Camden (1780), Cowpens (1781), Hobkirk's Hill (1781), Eutaw Springs (1781), and Yorktown (1781), serving until his retirement in April 1783. [26] During the battle of Camden, Mitchell was hit with a musket ball in the chest, and, as the story goes, his gold watch key deflected the ball, saving his life. [27] In November

1783, he joined the Society of the Cincinnati of Maryland, meaning he was one of the Society's original members along with [John Hoskins Stone](#) and [Mordecai Gist](#). [28]

Many years later, he served as a vestryman of Charles County's Durham Parish from 1791 to 1795, in 1797, and 1799 to 1801. [29] For the first two years of his service, Smallwood was a fellow vestry member until his death in February 1792. Mitchell had been a member of the parish since the 1770s, like Smallwood, and remained a member until the end of his life. [30] He petitioned the legislature for money to repair of the parish's church, called Old Durham Church or [Christ Church](#), and building a chapel. The church, near the current town of [Ironsides](#), was built in 1732 and [visited by George Washington](#) in 1771. [31]

After the war, Mitchell settled down in Southern Maryland. He may have owned 62-acre plantation located in the adjacent Calvert County named Thatcomb along with seven horses and six enslaved blacks. [32] However, it is clear that Mitchell lived in Charles County from 1790 to 1810, with his wife and children, and owned an average of about twenty-two enslaved blacks. [33] By 1810, he owned the 732-acre plantation in [Nanjemoy, Charles County](#), named Holly Springs, along with twenty-five to thirty enslaved blacks, where he grew tobacco. [34] He also owned two other small tracts containing about 90 acres, one near [Port Tobacco](#), Maryland and another in present-day Washington D.C. [35] He also had about 200 acres in Western Maryland and thousands of acres in Federal land beyond the Appalachian Mountains. It is not known when he obtained the plantation since the previous owner, Walter Hanson Harrison, rector of Durham Parish, resided there until his death in 1798. [36]

While living in Charles County, he married Lucinda "Lucy" Heaberl Truman Stoddert. They had one child named John Truman Stoddert Heaberl Mitchell, who Mitchell later called his "eldest son." [37] Nine years later, in 1800, Mitchell, with his nine-year-old son, sued John and Priscilla Courts for control of Smallwood's estate. He was able to file as a co-heir to Smallwood because his wife Lucy, was the niece of William Smallwood. [38] As for the Court family, Smallwood's sister, Prescilla, married John Courts, creating another familial tie. [39] The resolution of this case is not known.

After the death of Lucy Stoddert, Mitchell married a woman named Catherine Barnes. [40] Mitchell and Catherine had four children: Walter Hanson Jennifer Mitchell (1801-1870), Richard Henry Barnes, Mary Ann Mitchell and Elizabeth Mitchell. [41]

Mitchell held numerous public offices after the war. From 1794-1797 he served in the Maryland militia. [42] He first served as lieutenant colonel of the Forty-Third Regiment of Maryland militia in Charles County. He later served as Brigadier General, and he carried the title "General John Mitchell" for the rest of his life, of the Fifth Brigade of Maryland militia. When this term of service ended, in 1797, he was appointed as commissioner of the tax for Charles County by the state legislature. [43] A few years later, from 1801 to 1802, he was a magistrate in Charles County. [44] Interestingly, he was appointed as a magistrate by Governor John F. Mercer, a Continental Army officer during the Revolutionary War.

Mitchell was a supporter of the Republican Party. He ran as a presidential elector in 1796 and 1804 but lost to Federalist candidates both times. [45] In later years, he again ran as a presidential elector and for

the U.S. House of Representatives, but he earned fewer than ten votes in each election, losing to Federalist and other Republican candidates. [46] This political allegiance puts his letter to Thomas Jefferson in 1810 in more context.

In 1810, Mitchell wrote Jefferson, former President of the United States, calling himself "a decided friend & supporter of the [Jefferson] Administration." [47] He also said that he had been swindled out of about two thousand dollars and asked Jefferson to assist him. In closing, Mitchell said that his wife, "two lovely Daughters...2 promising Boys & himself" would "call him blessed" if Jefferson lent him money.

On October 11, 1812, Mitchell died in [Welcome, Charles County](#). [48] He had become a well-off planter, slaveowner, and gentleman. He willed his six enslaved blacks to his sons, John, Walter, and Richard, and daughter, Elizabeth and his plantation to his wife, Catherine. [49] He also equally divided his property among his children. He paid for a funeral after his death, and asked that his wife be paid whatever is necessary for her support and to continue education of his sons and daughters. [50] At the time of his death, he ran a plantation, worked by seventeen enslaved blacks, which grew wheat, tobacco, and cotton. [51] It also had farm animals such as cows, pigs, and sheep. As for Mitchell, he was very well-read, possessing books on geography, English history, and an "old world map."

After his death, his wife Catherine was appointed as executor of his estate. [52] She tried to pay off creditors and address Mitchell's debt. This was only the beginning of battles over his estate. From 1819 to 1851, the Barnes and Mitchell families fought over his estate, arguing in a huge legal case, that each of them had valid claims to John Mitchell's property. [53] The main points of contention in this case were over ownership of land and enslaved blacks. While the Barnes family administered the estate of Catherine in 1814, John Mitchell's son, Walter H.J. Mitchell, managed the estate until 1822 when the property passed into the Barnes family, adding fuel to the ongoing legal case. [54] Before the case, the Barnes family served as Walter's guardians after his father passed away. [55] It was not until 1851, 39 years after Mitchell's death, that the fight over his estate would end.

On October 30, 1812, the [Federal Gazette and Baltimore Daily Advertiser](#), a Baltimorean paper with Federalist leanings, wrote a glowing obituary for John Mitchell. [56] They declared that he valiantly fought for his country, which was proud to serve for, and that he was not adequately compensated for his services. [57] They also said that Mitchell was born when "heroism and love of country were common virtues," that his "heart beat high with liberty" when he joined the Continental Army but that by the end of the war he "was rich in fame but poor in worldly circumstances."

The *Gazette* also claimed that Mitchell "lived to feel the ingratitude of his country and to witness her disgrace." This is likely a reference to the attack on a fellow Federalist paper, the *Federal Republican*, published by Alexander Contee Hanson, by a group of angry Baltimoreans four months before, leading not only to a "riotous temper" in the town, but the [first casualties of the war](#) on the streets of Baltimore. [58] The *Gazette*, which often reprinted selections from the *Federal Republican*, also declared that the War of 1812 was "Madison's War," protesting the new taxes to fight the war, the "horrors of war," and the fight to acquire Canada. [59]

Despite Mitchell's different political viewpoint, the *Gazette* likely wrote the obituary because they wanted to harken back to the Revolutionary period and further oppose the War of 1812. [60] Their eulogy ended on a high note, saying that with his death he had found "a refuge in the silence of the tomb and he trust his patriotism will now be rewarded. Light lie the sod that covers the breast of a solder. Honored be his memory."

- Burkely Hermann, Maryland Society of the Sons of American Revolution Research Fellow, 2016.

Notes

[1] "[John Mitchell to Thomas Jefferson, 26 February 1810](#)," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016; Will of Hugh Mitchell, 1761, Charles County Register of Wills, Wills, MdHR 7285, Liber AD 5, p. 180-181 [MSA C681-5, 1/8/10/5]; George A. Hanson, *Old Kent: The Eastern Shore of Maryland* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2002, reprint), 114-115, 117, 119-120; Swepson Earle, *Chesapeake Bay Country* (Baltimore: Thomsen Ellis Co., 1929), 116; [Capt. John Mitchell gravestone](#), *Find A Grave*, updated November 12, 2012, accessed September 7, 2016. Some sources say he was born in 1756, but he said that he was a seventeen year-old when he enlisted in the Continental Army in his letter to Thomas Jefferson, creating some ambiguity about his birth date. Some sources say he was born in Saint Mary's County but this cannot be confirmed. Mitchell's father had a brother named John Mitchell which must be kept in mind when reading his two-page will.

[2] Hanson, 119; Will of Hugh Mitchell; Inventory of Hugh Mitchell, 1761, Charles County Register of Wills, Wills, MdHR 7299, Liber 4, p. 299-302 [MSA C665-4, 1/8/10/19].

[3] Deed of Hugh Mitchell to George Hutton, 1757, Charles County Court, Land Records, Liber G 3, p. 97-98 [MSA CE 82-32]; Deed of Hugh Mitchell to Ralph Shaw, 1759, Charles County Court, Land Records, Liber G 3, p. 290-292 [MSA CE 82-32]; Deed of Hugh Mitchell to Alexander McPherson, 1760, Charles County Court, Land Records, Liber G 3, p. 412-413 [MSA CE 82-32]; Deed of John Mitchell (his brother) to Hugh Mitchell, 1760, Charles County Court, Land Records, Liber G 3, p. 435-436 [MSA CE 82-32]; Deed of John Smoot to Hugh Mitchell, 1760, Charles County Court, Land Records, Liber G 3, p. 437-439 [MSA CE 82-32]; Sale of Hugh Mitchell to Leonard Mitchell, 1761, Charles County Court, Land Records, Liber G 3, p. 525-527 [MSA CE 82-32]; Hanson, 119; David Dobson, *More Scottish Settlers, 1667-1827* (Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., 2005), 54; Harry Wright Newman, *The Maryland Semmes and Kindred Families: A Genealogical History of Marmaduke Semme(s), Gent., and His Descendants* (Westminister, MD: Heritage Books, 2007, reprint), 270; Harry Wright Newman, *Charles County Gentry: A Genealogical History of Six Emigrants - Thomas Dent, John Dent, Richard Edelen, John Hanson, George Newman, Humphrey Warren* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2002, reprint), 237, 252; Will of Hugh Mitchell; Administration account of Hugh Mitchell, October 1764, Charles County Register of Wills, Administration Accounts, MdHR 7312, p. 126-129 [MSA C650-4, 1/8/10/32]; Inventory of Hugh Mitchell, 1761, Charles County Register of Wills, Inventories, MdHR Liber 4, p. 299-301 [MSA 7299, 1/8/10/19]. Mitchell's plantation had farm animals such as horses. As for Mitchell himself, he was well read enough to have books on history of the Portuguese, the Bible, and many other books. Also, Anne later remarried to a man named

Samuel Stone. Additionally, records also show that the estate of Hugh Mitchell was not fully settled until three years after his death in 1764.

[4] Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1760, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17673-4, Liber 14, CH, p. 7 [MSA S12-77, 1/24/2/14]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1763, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17674-2, Liber 15 (1763), CH, p. 1 [MSA S12-80, 1/24/2/15]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1764, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17674-3, Liber 15 (1764), CH, p. 1 [MSA S12-81, 1/24/2/15]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1765, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17674-4, Liber 15 (1765), CH, p. 1 [MSA S12-82, 1/24/2/15]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1766, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17674-5, Liber 15 (1766), CH, p. 1 [MSA S12-83, 1/24/2/15]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1767, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17675-1, Liber 16 (1767), CH, p. 1 [MSA S12-84, 1/24/2/16]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1768, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17675-2, Liber 16 (1768), CH, p. 1 [MSA S12-85, 1/24/2/16]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1769, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17675-3, Liber 16 (1769), CH, p. 1 [MSA S12-86, 1/24/2/16]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1770, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17675-4, Liber 16 (1770), CH, p. 51 [MSA S12-87, 1/24/2/16]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1771, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17675-5, Liber 16 (1771), CH, p. 34 [MSA S12-88, 1/24/2/16]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1772, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17676-1, Liber 17 (1772), CH, p. 48 [MSA S12-89, 1/24/2/17]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1773, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17676-2, Liber 17 (1773), CH, p. 60 [MSA S12-90, 1/24/2/17]; Entry for Hugh Mitchell, 1774, Land Office, Debt Book, MdHR 17676-3, Liber 17 (1774), CH, p. 47 [MSA S12-91, 1/24/2/17]

[5] Muster Rolls and Other Records of Service of Maryland Troops in the American Revolution *Archives of Maryland Online* vol. 18, [5](#); Roster of regular officers in Smallwood's battalion, January 1777, Red Books, MdHR 4573, Red Book 12, p. 66 [MSA S989-17, 1/6/4/5].

[6] Mark Andrew Tacyn “‘To the End:’ The First Maryland Regiment and the American Revolution” (PhD diss., University of Maryland College Park, 1999), 21.

[7] *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, October 31, 1812, Vol. XXXVIII, issue 5734, p. 3.

[8] James Thacher, *A Military Journal During the American Revolutionary War, from 1775 to 1783* (Boston: A Richardson and Lord, 1823), 458, 468-470, 473, 475, 483-484, 520; Journal and Correspondence of the Maryland Council of Safety, July 7-December 31, 1776 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 12, [145](#); Muster Rolls and Other Records of Service of Maryland Troops in the American Revolution *Archives of Maryland Online* vol. 18, [335](#).

[9] Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, 1781-1784 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 48, [343](#); Journal and Correspondence of the Maryland Council of Safety, July 7-December 31, 1776 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 12, [125](#), [255](#); Journal of the Maryland Convention July 26 to August 14, 1775 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 11, [50](#); Proceedings of the Conventions of the Province of Maryland, 1774-1776 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 78, [23](#); Journal and Correspondence of the Maryland Council of Safety, August 29, 1775 to July 6, 1776 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 11, [439](#); Journal and Correspondence of the Maryland Council of Safety, January 1-March 20, 1777 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 16, [334](#).

- [10] Thatcher, 45, 73, 476; Proceedings of the Conventions of the Province of Maryland, 1774-1776 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 78, [92](#).
- [11] Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, 1779-1780 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 43, [71](#).
- [12] Arthur Alexander, "How Maryland Tried to Raise Her Continental Quotas." *Maryland Historical Magazine* 42, no. 3 (1947), 187-188, 196.
- [13] [Return of the six Independent Companies and First Regiment of Maryland Regulars, in the service of the United Colonies, commanded by Colonel Smallwood](#), Sept. 13, 1776, National Archives, NARA M804, Record Group 93, Roll 0034, courtesy of Fold3.com; Return of the First Regiment of Maryland Regulars in the service of the United Colonies Commanded by William Smallwood, Oct. 11, 1776, p. 92-93, National Archives, NARA M804, Record Group 93, Roll 0034, folder 35, courtesy of Fold3.com; Tacyn, 95. Stone was sick, and one musician, a drummer or fifer, was needed to complete the rank-and-file of the company in the fall of 1776.
- [14] Tacyn, 4.
- [15] Francis B. Heitman, *Historical Register and Dictionary of the U.S. Army* Vol 1 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903), 395; Service Card of John Mitchell (First Maryland Regiment), Compiled Service Records of Soldiers Who Served in the American Army During the Revolutionary War, National Archives, NARA M881, Record Group 93, roll 0398. Courtesy of Fold3.com; Muster Rolls and Other Records of Service of Maryland Troops in the American Revolution *Archives of Maryland Online* vol. 18, [136](#). This lists Mitchell as becoming captain in July 1777 but this does not align with other records and is incorrect.
- [16] Heitman, 395; Service Card of John Mitchell (First Maryland Regiment); Pension of Adam Addams, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files, National Archives, NARA M804, Record Group 15, Roll 0008, pension number S. 34,623. Courtesy of Fold3.com.
- [17] Service Card of John Mitchell (First Maryland Regiment); Tacyn, 15, 139, 209; Port Tobacco West Hundred, March 1778, Charles County Court, Census of 1778, MdHR 8167-2, Liber X 3, p. 630-632 [MSA C654-1, 1/7/7/27]. The census says that he was one of the men living in Charles County that was older than 18 which would align with his birth record. To read more about the battle of Brandywine see the "[British “masters of the field”: The disaster at Brandywine](#)" on the Finding the Maryland 400 blog.
- [18] Heitman, 395.
- [19] Patrick O'Kelley, *Unwaried Patience and Fortitude: Francis Marion's Orderly Book* (West Conoshocken, PA: Infinity Publishing, 2007), iii.
- [20] Harry M. Ward, *George Washington's Enforcers: Policing the Continental Army* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2006), 193; George W. Mitchell, *Memoir of Brigadier-General John Dagworthy of the Revolutionary War* (Wilmington: Historical Society of Delaware, 1895), 7, 58-59. This duty was also shared by the corporal and sergeant, who they likely worked with in keeping order.

- [21] Robert K. Wright Jr., *The Continental Army* (Washington D.C., Center of Military History, 1983), 18, 176; [Frederick Stueben, *Regulations for Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States, Part I* \(Philadelphia: Styner and Cist, 1779\)](#), 132-134.
- [22] Heitman, 395; Muster Rolls and Other Records of Service of Maryland Troops in the American Revolution *Archives of Maryland Online* vol. 18, [70](#), [137](#), [229](#), [286](#), [346](#), [364](#), [380](#), [382](#), [476](#), [480](#), [602](#), [615](#), [641](#); S. Eugene Clements and F. Edward Wright, *The Maryland Militia in the Revolutionary War* (Silver Spring, MD: Family Lien Publications, 1987), 104, 154, 166, 171, 172. This rank in July 1779 makes it clear that he is not the same as John Pugh Mitchell who is a captain in the Fourth Maryland Regiment in 1779, a deserter in Somerset county, a private in a number of different regiments or other members of the Continental line.
- [23] Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, 1779-1780 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 43, [118](#), [163](#), [223](#), [322](#).
- [24] Daniel Wunderlich Nead, *The Pennsylvania-German in the Settlement of Maryland* (Lancaster, PA: Pennsylvania German Society, 1914), 255-259; Hanson's Laws of Maryland, Session Laws 1779, *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 203, [214](#). See "An Act relating to the officers and soldiers of this state in the American army, and other purposes therein mentioned" for specifics of the law which passed.
- [25] Heitman, 395; Muster Rolls and Other Records of Service of Maryland Troops in the American Revolution *Archives of Maryland Online* vol. 18, [370](#), [458](#). Some letters indicate that there was a Captain John Mitchell in the First Maryland Regiment, but this contradicts the record as laid out by Heitman.
- [26] Heitman, 395; Muster Rolls and Other Records of Service of Maryland Troops in the American Revolution *Archives of Maryland Online* vol. 18, [521](#); ["John Mitchell to Thomas Jefferson, 26 February 1810," Founders Online](#), National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016. Some sources say he served until November 1783 but this is not supported by the available evidence. For more information on the battles of Brandywine and Hobkirk's Hill, see "[British “masters of the field”: The disaster at Brandywine](#)" and "[A Short Fight on Hobkirk’s Hill: Surprise, Blame, and Defeat](#)" on the Finding the Maryland 400 research blog.
- [27] Charles County Bicentennial Committee, *Charles County, Maryland: A History* (So. Hackensack, NJ: Custom Book Inc., 1976), 311.
- [28] Society of the Cincinnati of Maryland, *Register of the Society of the Cincinnati of Maryland Brought Down to February 22nd, 1897* (Baltimore, Order of the Society, 1897), 95.
- [29] Margaret Brown Klopter and Paul Dennis Brown, *History of Charles County Maryland* (La Plata: Charles County Tercentenary, 1958), 73-74; [William Smallwood gravestone, Find A Grave](#), updated July 28, 2007, accessed September 13, 2016; Durham Parish Vestry Minutes, 1776-1777, 1791-1811, Special Collections, Durham Parish Collection, p. 47-49, 51, 53-58, 61, 63, 65-66, 68-73, 76, 78, 83, 91, 93, 95, 113-114, 119, 122, 129-131, 133 [[MSA SC 2604-1-1](#), SCM 9950-1 (scanned)]. Since he is

not listed in many of the records after this point, it is hard to know if he was still considered a vestryman between 1795-1797, and 1797-1799 since his attendance record was not, in those years and afterwards as consistent as it had been between 1791-1795, possibly because of other civic duties. Interestingly, after 1800, he was called Gen. John Mitchell, likely because of service in the militia. His son, John H.T.S. was later a member of the vestry from 1808 to 1811.

[30] Session Laws, 1811 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 614, [74](#); The Laws of Maryland from the End of the Year 1799 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 192, [1183](#), [1184](#); "[John Mitchell to Thomas Jefferson, 26 February 1810](#)," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016; Durham Parish Vestry Minutes, 1791-1811, Special Collections, Durham Parish Collection, p. 8-9, 12 [[MSA SC 2604-1-1](#), SCM 9950-1 (scanned)].

[31] "[[Diary entry: 30 May 1771](#)]," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016; [Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties](#), "Old Durham Parish Church historic marker," CH-851 [[MSA SE5-30950](#)]; [Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties](#), "Old Durham Church (Christ Episcopal Church)." CH-63 [[MSA SE5-7900](#)].

[32] Thatcomb land tract, 1783, Assessment of 1783, CV 2nd District, p. 20 [[MSA S1161-3-2](#), 1/4/5/46 (scanned)]; [Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties](#), "Linden," CH-48 [[MSA SE5-7882](#)]; Earle, 115-16, 119; Christopher R. Eck, *Southern Maryland's Historic Landmarks* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2016), 101. This farm was not Linden as some sources have indicated since a wealthy merchant in [Port Tobacco](#), Henry Barnes, owned the property at the time. Walter Mitchell would not occupy the property until much later. Some claim that John Mitchell built the property of Linden but this cannot be confirmed.

[33] Census of 1790 for Charles County, U.S. Census Bureau, Maryland Census Record, p. 576 [[MSA SM61-7](#), SCM 2053-1 (scanned)]; Census of 1800 for Charles County's Durham Parish, U.S. Census Bureau, Maryland Census Record, p. 495 [[MSA SM61-28](#), SCM 2055-3 (scanned)]; Census of 1810 for Charles County, U.S. Census Bureau, Maryland Census Record, p. 315 [[MSA SM61-48](#), SCM 2060-4 (scanned)]. This average comes from these records: 21 enslaved blacks in 1790, 24 enslaved blacks in 1800 and 16 enslaved blacks in 1810. Other census information shows that in 1790 two white people over the age of 16, one free white male under age 16, and three white females lived in the household. The 1800 census on the other hand shows 32 people, in total, living in the household, including two free white males under the age of 10, one free white male under the age of 16, two free white males under age 45, two free white women under the age of 10, and one free white woman over the age of 45. This could mean that Mitchell had indentured servants or other wage-workers at his plantation. The final census used here is the 1810 census which lists one white male under age two, one white male up to age 10, one white male above age 45, one white woman age 10 or older, one white woman under age 20, and one white female of age 45 and older.

[34] "[John Mitchell to Thomas Jefferson, 26 February 1810](#)," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016; Durham Parish Vestry Minutes, 1776-1777, Special Collections, Durham Parish Collection, p. 57 [[MSA SC 2604-1-1](#), SCM 9950-1 (scanned)].

[35] "[John Mitchell to Thomas Jefferson, 26 February 1810](#)," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016; *Westward of Fort Cumberland: Military Lots Set Off for Maryland's Revolutionary Soldiers* (ed. Mary K. Meyer, Baltimore: Heritage Books, 1994), 4; Indenture of John Mitchell to Thomas Crackell, 1780, Charles County Court, Land Records, Liber V 3, p. 480-481 [MSA CE 82-36]; Indenture of John Mitchell to George Noble Lyles, 1803, Charles County Court, Land Records, Liber IB 5, p. 326-329 [MSA CE 82-43].

[36] [Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, "Holly Springs," CH-109 \[MSA SE5-7941\]](#); Peter Kolchin, *American Slavery: 1619-1877* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003, reprint), 34; Jeffrey Richardson Brackett, *The Negro in Maryland: A Study of the Institution of Slavery* Vol. 6 (Baltimore: N. Murray, 1889), 49, 52. He was the brother of [Samuel Hanson](#), a member of the lower house for Charles County. This means that Mitchell was among many of the white households of the Maryland and Virginia tidewater region who owned enslaved blacks, many of whom, in Maryland, lived in Calvert and Charles counties. Other counties with large enslaved black populations were Prince George's and St. Mary's counties.

[37] Gen. John Mitchell Will, November 14, 1812, Charles County Register of Wills, Estate Papers, MdHR 7326-15 [MSA C651-16, 1/8/11/34]; Hanson, 119; *Genealogies of Virginia Families: From Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine* Vol. 1 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2007), 119; Will of John Mitchell, February 1812, Charles County Register of Wills, Wills, MdHR 7294, Liber HBBH 13, p. 192, 194 [MSA C681-14, 1/8/10/14]; *Genealogies of Virginia Families: From Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine* Vol. 1 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2007), 118. He was born with the name of John Truman Stoddert Heaberl Mitchell or John T. S. Heaberl Mitchell for the short, with Heaberl sometimes spelled as Heberd. He is not the same person as [John Truman Stoddert](#) who was born to [different parents](#).

[38] John Herbert Truman Stoddart Mitchell and John Mitchell vs. John Courts and Priscilla Courts in the case of William Smallwood's estate, 1800, Chancery Court, Chancery Papers, MdHR 17898-3602 [MSA S512-3720, 1/36/3/65]; Pension of William Smallwood, Revolutionary War Pension and Bounty-Land Warrant Application Files, National Archives, NARA M804, Record Group 15, Roll 2202, pension number B. L. Wt. 656-1100. Courtesy of Fold3.com; Harrison Dwight Cavanagh, *Colonial Chesapeake Families: British Origins and Descendants* Vol. 2 (Bloomington, IN: XLibris, 2014), 189; *Genealogies of Virginia Families: From Tyler's Quarterly Historical and Genealogical Magazine* Vol. 1 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2007), 118.

[39] Pension of William Smallwood; Papenfuse, Edward C., et. al. "William Smallwood," in *A Biographical Dictionary of the Maryland Legislature, 1635-1789*, vol. 2: I-Z. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979, pp. [741](#). John Courts may have been related to [William Courts](#).

[40] [Catherine Barnes Mitchell gravestone](#), *Find A Grave*, updated November 24, 2012, accessed September 7, 2016; Will of John Mitchell, 193.

[41] John Barnes petition for letters of the estate of General Mitchell, October 12, 1814, Charles County Register of Wills, Estate Papers, MdHR 7326-17 [MSA C651-17, 1/8/11/36]; Will of John

Mitchell, 193; [Gen Walter Hanson Jennifer Mitchell gravestone](#), *Find A Grave*, updated June 8, 2011, accessed September 7, 2016. He would later serve as a Confederate general in the Civil War.

[42] Appointments of John Mitchell, 1794-1796, Adjutant General, Militia Appointments, MdHR 5587, Militia Appointments Liber 2, p. 90, 94 [MSA S348-2, 2/6/5/10]; Earle, 116. This resource is also scanned at SR 2332. This confirms Earle, among other sources, that claim that he was in charge of state militia in Charles County before his death.

[43] Session Laws, 1797 *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 652, [93](#).

[44] Appointment of John Mitchell, 1801-1802, Governor and Council, Appointment List, MdHR 1900 [MSA S1082-3, 2/26/4/40]; Resignation of John Mitchell, 1802-1803, Governor and Council, Appointment List, MdHR 1901 [MSA S1082-4, 2/26/4/40].

[45] [Maryland 1804 Electoral College, District 1 election](#), A New Nation Votes: American Election Returns 1787-1825, Tufts University, accessed September 14, 2016; [Maryland 1796 Electoral College, District 1 election](#), A New Nation Votes: American Election Returns 1787-1825, Tufts University, accessed September 14, 2016.

[46] [Maryland 1808 Electoral College, District 1 election](#), A New Nation Votes: American Election Returns 1787-1825, Tufts University, accessed September 14, 2016; [Maryland 1808 U.S. House of Representatives, District 1 election](#), A New Nation Votes: American Election Returns 1787-1825, Tufts University, accessed September 14, 2016.

[47] "John Mitchell to Thomas Jefferson, 26 February 1810," *Founders Online*, National Archives, last modified July 12, 2016.

[48] [Capt. John Mitchell gravestone](#), *Find A Grave*, updated November 12, 2012, accessed September 7, 2016.

[49] Will of John Mitchell, 191-195; John Barnes petition for letters of the estate of General Mitchell. The enslaved blacks included four male children named Peggy, Phil, Allen, John (given to him by Richard Barnes) and Davie, one female child named Anney, and Sophia, the mother of Davie. Interestingly, he said his son John was entitled to 1/6 part of the enslaved black child, named John.

[50] He allowed for his sons Walter and Richard to own his plantation if his wife died. In the event that his sons died, then the ownership of his plantation would be transferred to his daughters Mary and Elizabeth.

[51] Gen. John Mitchell Will; Inventory of John Mitchell, 1813, Charles County Register of Wills, Inventories, MdHR 7306-1, p. 104-108 [MSA C665-15, 1/8/10/26]; Gen. John Mitchell Inventory, June 11, 1813, Charles County Register of Wills, Estate Papers, MdHR 7326-16 [MSA C651-16, 1/8/11/35]. Mitchell owned books such as Volume 1 of John Marshall's *Life of Washington*, Thomas Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia*, and David Hume's Eight Volume *History of England*, a volume of John Locke's works, and Newton *Principles of Philosophy*. His inventory also shows that he was a "gentleman"

planter, and that his plantation had cotton, spinning wheel, plows and wheelbarrows, among other possessions.

[52] Catherine Mitchell Petition, June 9, 1813, Charles County Register of Wills, Estate Papers, MdHR 7326-16 [MSA C651-16, 1/8/11/35]; Catherine Mitchell petition for a process, December 9, 1812, Charles County Register of Wills, Estate Papers, MdHR 7326-14 [MSA C651-14, 1/8/11/33].

[53] Inventories of John and Catherine Mitchell, 1824, Charles County Register of Wills, Inventories, MdHR 7309-1, p. 454-455, 457-460, 468-474 [MSA C665-18, 1/8/20/29]; Inventories of John and Catherine Mitchell, 1821, Charles County Register of Wills, Inventories, MdHR 7308-1, p. 386-389 [MSA C665-17, 1/8/20/28].

[54] John Barnes vs. Walter H.J. Mitchell with an injunction against execution of judgment, 1836, Chancery Court, Chancery Papers, MdHR 17898-6518 [MSA S512-6577, 1/37/3/40]; Walter H. Mitchell vs. John Barnes on the issue of the estate of Mary B. Barnes and an enslaved black named William, 1836, Chancery Court, Chancery Papers, MdHR 17898-9458 [MSA S512-9373, 1/38/5/3]; Catherine Mitchell Testamentary Bond, December 8, 1815, Charles County Register of Wills, Estate Papers, MdHR 7326-18 [MSA C651-18, 1/8/11/37]; Gen. John Mitchell Testamentary Bond, November 14, 1812, Charles County Register of Wills, Estate Papers, MdHR 7326-15 [MSA C651-15, 1/8/11/34]; John Mitchell Administration Bond, December 8, 1814, Charles County Register of Wills, Estate Papers, MdHR 7326-17 [MSA C651-17, 1/8/11/36].

[55] Walter H.J. Mitchell Guardian Bond, December 8, 1815, Charles County Register of Wills, Estate Papers, MdHR 7326-18 [MSA C651-18, 1/8/11/37].

[56] *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, October 31, 1812, Vol. XXXVIII, issue 5734, p. 3; Edward L. Larson, *A Magnificent Catastrophe: The Tumultuous Election of 1800, America's First Presidential Campaign* (New York: Free Press, 2007), 147; Philip I. Blumberg, *Repressive Jurisprudence in the Early American Republic: The First Amendment and the Legacy of English Law* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 42; Bruce Ackerman, *The Failure of the Founding Fathers: Jefferson, Marshall, and the Rise of Presidential Democracy* (London: Belknap Press, 2010), 320; *Religion and the American Presidency* (ed. Mark J. Rozell and Gleaves Whitney, New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 2007), 48-49; Eric R. Schlereth, *An Age of Infidels: The Politics of Religious Controversy in the Early United States* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 124; L. Marx Renzulli, *Maryland: The Federalist Years* (Madison: Fairleigh University Press, 1972), 183; Cheryl C. Boots, *Singing for Equality: Hymns in the American Antislavery and Indian Rights Movements, 1640-1855* (London: McFarland and Symbol Company, 2013), 82; John C. Nefane, *Violence Against the Press: Policing the Public Sphere in U.S. History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 70; Frank A. Cassell, *Merchant Congressman in the Young Republic: Samuel Smith of Maryland, 1752-1839* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), 72, 83, 89; A. Rachel Minick, *A History of Printing in Maryland 1791-1800* (Baltimore: Enoch Pratt Free Library, 1949), 42, 43, 44. They also took a position in favor of church property, against deists, and carried an obit of a black preacher, Richard Allen. John Hewes, editor of the paper, was called a "federalist editor" by Eric R. Schlereth.

[57] *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, Dec. 7, 1811, Vol. XXXV, issue 5455, p. 2. It is not known whether they were right about Mitchell not being adequately compensated but he did petition the state legislature in 1811, along with Robert Halkerstone of Charles County, for relief as a late revolutionary officer.

[58] Testimony of John Worthington and Nicholas Brice on "the attack on the Federal Republican Office," 1812, Maryland State Archives, Accession Problems and Miscellaneous [MSA T68-14-2, 2/4/2/14].

[59] "Important Letter from France. From the Federal Republican," *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, June 3, 1812, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5608, p. 2; "From the Federal Republican," *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, April 15, 1812, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5566, p. 2; "The "6257". From the Federal Republican," *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, May 9, 1812, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5587, p. 3; *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, March 12, 1812, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5537, p. 3; "From the Federal Republican. Disbursement of Public Money," *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5500, p. 2; *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, December 2, 1812, Vol. XXXVIII, issue 5761, p. 3; *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, October 21, 1812, Vol. XXXVIII, issue 5725, p. 3; "Congress of the United States," *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, June 17, 1812, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5620, p. 3; *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, June 9, 1812, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5612, p. 2; *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, June 19, 1812, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5622, p. 3; "Letter of Edwin Gray," *Federal Gazette*, Baltimore, June 5, 1812, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5610, p. 2; "Philadelphia, June 15," *Federal Gazette*, June 16, 1812, Vol. XXXVI, issue 5619, p. 3.

[60] Michael Schudson, Discovering the News, *Key Readings in Journalism* (ed. Elliot King and Jane L. Chapman, New York: Routledge, 2012), 16. The Gazette was also, like many papers before the 1830s, was trying to gain a "readership of commercial elites." Additionally, the paper was changing ownership with longtime editor, John Hewes, selling the paper to thirty-seven year-old William Gwynn, who would remain the paper's editor until 1833. The paper's publishers likely also changed, who were also federalist, named Leonard Yundt and Matthew Brown as noted by the Library of Congress. Hewes's letter discussing the sale is also available as part of the William Allen Blankenship, Jr., Collection.

<http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc3500/sc3520/016700/016772/html/16772bio.html>